

## The Burden of Suicide

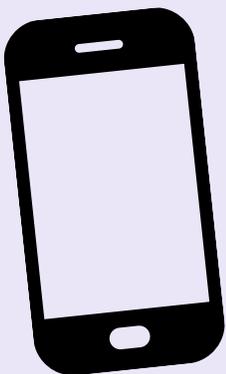
- The impact of suicide extends beyond the immediate family to friends, coworkers, and the community as a whole.
- On a broader scale, when a death occurs, the community loses the contribution that person could have made to society.
- For each youth suicide death (ages 10-18) in North Carolina, there are approximately seven non-fatal hospitalizations and 29 non-fatal emergency department visits for self-harm/self-inflicted injuries. There are additional injuries that may go without detection.

## Prevention Messages

- Early identification of signs and symptoms of mental health disorders, especially depression, is an important part of suicide prevention.
- Youth can act quickly on suicidal feelings. Therefore, safely storing firearms and medications in the home reduces access to two commonly used suicide methods.
- The stigma of mental health disorders must be addressed for individuals needing help to not feel shame, guilt, or fear of seeking treatment.
- Specific media guidelines on reporting suicide deaths have been developed to prevent "copycat" suicides, particularly among youth.

## Prevention Activities in the State

- Organizations that partner and network with the state provide suicide awareness education, early intervention skills training, referral and information to treatment services and support for family and friends who have experienced the suicide of a loved one.



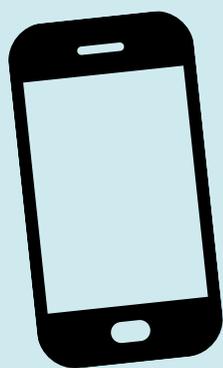
If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide,  
PLEASE contact The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

**1-800-273-TALK**  
**(1-800-273-8255)**

**[www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)**

## Warning Signs of Suicide

- A sudden worsening in academic performance
- Withdrawal from friends and extracurricular activities
- Feelings of sadness and hopelessness, or anger and rage
- A sudden decline in enthusiasm and energy
- Overreaction to criticism
- Lowered self-esteem, or feelings of guilt
- Indecision, lack of concentration, and forgetfulness
- Restlessness and agitation
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Unprovoked episodes of crying
- Sudden neglect of appearance and hygiene
- Fatigue
- Alcohol and/or drug use as a means to "self-medicate" their emotional pain
- Talking or writing about suicide or death
- Giving direct verbal cues, such as "I wish I were dead" or "I'm going to end it all"
- Giving less direct verbal cues, such as "You will be better off without me,"
- "What's the point of living?", "Soon you won't have to worry about me," and "Who cares if I'm dead, anyway?"
- Isolating themselves from friends and family
- Expressing the belief that life is meaningless
- Giving away prized possessions
- Exhibiting a sudden and unexplained improvement in mood after being depressed or withdrawn
- Neglecting their appearance and hygiene
- Dropping out of school or social, athletic, and/or community activities



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